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ABSTRACT

This literature review focuses on beginning teacher induction programs and addresses the following issues germane to the mentorship process: (1) the role of induction support programs for new teachers; (2) what mentoring is; (3) the mentor's role during the induction process; (4) the characteristics of effective mentor/protege relationships; (5) common problems encountered by participants in the mentor/protege relationship; (6) the role of administrative personnel in the mentor/protege relationship; and (7) the various stages of the mentor/protege relationship. Information for review and classification was gathered from 23 primary research studies, an ERIC search, and attendance at the Annual Conference on Mentorship. Findings indicate that induction support of new teachers often has a critical bearing on new teachers' decisions to stay or leave the profession. A list of recommendations is put forth as follows: in-service training for administrators and peer teachers; availability of mentors for new teachers; appropriate training for all mentor teachers; continued research regarding the effects of different subject mentoring; and required preservice coursework with respect to classroom behavior and management techniques as well as how to work with special needs students. (LL)

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MENTORING

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

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June 17, 1991

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INTRODUCTION

Background Information

New teachers leave the education profession in alarming numbers within their first few years of working. This trend is due to feelings of isolation, lack of support from administrators and peers, unfamiliarity and discomfort with different presentation methods, and classroom management techniques. The newly graduated teacher arrives in the classroom, ill prepared to deal with the rigorous responsibilities of running a classroom, while at the same time teaching subject matter. Often, the new teacher is expected to function at the same level of competency as the seasoned veteran, and they are expected to do this from their first day on the job. Unlike their counterparts in other professions, there is virtually no time to learn new duties and responsibilities gradually. The new teacher's problems are exacerbated due to their own reluctance to seek help from administrators and peers. The novice is afraid to appear ignorant and incompetent. Often, due to fear and embarrassment, the new teacher becomes even more isolated from peers, and other forms of support, which may already be part of the school culture. Within the first few years, these teachers often leave the profession due to feelings of abandonment, isolation, and frustration (Huling-Austin,1990).

To deal with these problems, many states have implemented support structures in the form of Teacher Induction Programs .

Theoretically, induction programs facilitate the transition from student/intern, to competent classroom teacher. The basic premise of these programs is to help the new teacher become responsible for the broad range of teaching duties, while socializing them to become part of the teaching profession.

One of the methods which has become accepted in the teaching profession is the use of experienced, veteran teachers to advise and support the novice teacher for a minimum period of one year. The rationale behind this support system is to give the new teacher the necessary assistance required when most people enter a new profession. Another aspect of teacher induction is the process of assimilation into the teaching profession also referred to as acculturation. The new teacher is exposed to the culture of teaching, through a systematic method of exposure to methods, standards and procedures. By following these avenues of training,the reasons many novice teachers leave the field of education are addressed proactively.

The dynamics of the mentor/protege relationship are of critical importance to the successful induction of novice teachers into the teaching profession. There have been a number of studies on the subject of induction and mentorship which suggest that the relationship passes through evolutionary-like stages from dependence on the part of the protege, to one in which the participants view each other as peers. There are other studies which discuss those environmental and managerial aspects of the mentor/protege relationship which aid in the success of, or act

to sabotage, the relationship. Therefore, this review will focus on several areas of interest and concern regarding the nature of the mentor protege relationship including various environmental aspects of the mentor/protege relationship which foster the development of competency and professionalism in the beginning teacher?

The following are questions addressed in this review,and are issues germane to the study of the mentorship process. These questions will be scrutinized regarding some of the intricacies of the relationship and the various factors which may have a positive or deleterious effect upon the relationship.

1. What is the role of induction support for new teachers?
2. What is mentoring,
3. What is the role of the mentor during the induction process?
4. What are the characteristics of effective mentor/protege relationships?
5. What are some of the problems encountered by the participants during the mentor/protege relationship?
6. What is the role of administrators regarding the mentor/protege relationship?
7. What are the stages of the mentor/protege relationship?

Definition of Terms

Selected terms determined to be important to this review are as follows:

1. MENTOR- An experienced teacher who is considered to be a

"master teacher" in his/her subject area. The mentor is considered to be an excellent role model and example of teaching at it's best

2. PROTEGE- Also referred to as the new teacher. The protege is the person who has been contracted to perform instructional and classroom management duties but who has no formal teaching experience other than the required student teaching or internship which is necessary for state certification.

3. NOVICE- Interchangeable term with the words protege and new teacher.

4. PEER- A fellow teacher.

5. ADMINISTRATOR- A Person at the District Supervisory level of authority who has direct responsibility regarding the hiring, retention, suspension, and termination of employees. The term administrator may also mean the school principal, and other persons who have the responsibility of overseeing the competence of those working in the school environment.

6. INDUCTION-"Planned experiences, activities, and studies to increase the beginning teachers knowledge and improve his/her teaching skills".(Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1987).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

The author reviewed eighty seven sources of information, including 23 primary research studies. The research was then classified according to the items discussed under the heading

research questions contained in this document. The different classifications consisted of the following areas of interest and relevance:

The role of induction support programs for new teachers.

What is mentoring.

The mentors role in the induction support of new teachers.

The characteristics of a successful mentor/protege relationship

Common problems encountered by the participants in the mentor/protege relationship

The role of administrative personnel in the mentor/protege relationship

The various stages of the mentor/protege relationship.

Description of Search Process

A multi-faceted approach was used to conduct research for the Vocational Teacher Induction Project for which this literature review was conducted. An ERIC search was done using the following subject headings: Mentor, Mentee, Protege, Novice Teacher, Beginning Teacher Induction, Induction, Mentoring, Mentor Teacher. From this ERIC search, a combination of nine hundred eleven articles and reports were found, all of which were reviewed in abstract form. It was determined that of the total number of abstracts which were reviewed, eighty seven were in direct relation to the subject under investigation These articles and reports were then obtained from the microfiche files and periodical sections of Morgan Library located on the campus

of Colorado State University, and through interlibrary loan service. Also, additional materials were obtained from Red Rocks Community College.

The Annual Conference on Mentorship was attended in April 1991, and current materials and resources were gathered which were not in print at that time due to the newness of the research.

In conjunction with the previously described efforts, a written request for materials and information regarding the subject of mentoring was sent to the State Liaison Representatives from the National Network for Curriculum Coordination in Vocational and Technical Education in all fifty states. A telephone follow-up was then conducted in order to ascertain if the letter was received and any materials sent by the various state offices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Induction in the Support of New Teachers

Many teacher induction programs originated from the concern that traditional teacher education programs were not adequately addressing the experiential needs of new teachers. It is reported in the literature that as early as 1809 programs existed to help new teachers (Elias, Fisher, and Simon, 1980).

Induction activites in the form of mentoring, were reported as being common in other professions such as medicine, social and public services, and business (Fagan & Walter, 1982). The use of

induction programs designed to aid the transition into the teaching profession came about as a result of high rates of attrition among new teachers. According to Huling-Austin(1986), as many as 40-50% leave the teaching profession within the first seven years of their career. Some of the most common reasons beginning teachers sited for leaving the profession were: problems with classroom management, discipline, isolation, relations with administrators and peers, and dealing with individual student differences (Veeman, 1984).

In conjunction with the issue of qualified teachers leaving the field, was the concern that student teaching experiences were not adequately preparing the teacher candidate for the realities of full-time teaching (Camp & Heath,1988). While involved in training as a student teacher, it is the cooperating teacher who ultimately has responsibility for making sure things run smoothly. The student teacher is not expected to deal with the realities of complete responsibility for teaching, managing students, and dealing with the myriad of duties associated with the role of teaching. The goals of teacher induction programs were: to improve teaching performance, increase the retention of promising new teachers, promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers, and to satisfy mandated requirements related to induction and certification (Huling-Austin, 1986). According to Schlechty (1985), the purpose of induction was to impart those skills, knowledge, attitudes, and

values, that are necessary to effectively carry out the teachers occupational roles.

What is Mentoring and It's Origin

Mentoring as it applies to the field of education in the process by which an experienced person who is considered to be a master teacher, actively participates in the professional development of the new teacher. Allman and Shannon (1988), describe mentoring as;

> "...a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protege." (p. 40)

According to this view the mentor relationship is multi-dimensional in nature and serves to facilitate growth. To further enhance the perception of mentoring as growth producing, Zey (1984), sees the mentoring relationship as a mechanism for career and personal development through;

> "teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting and sponsoring." (p. 7)

The Mentor Role During the Induction Process

As a way to improve the induction problems of new teachers, many school districts throughout the country have enlisted experienced, veteran teachers to become mentors and role models for new and inexperienced teachers (Gray & Gray,1985). Because

they were wiser and more experienced, mentors guided the new teacher and cultivated his or her talents (Merriman,1987).

The role of the mentor teacher has been characterized as being vital to the successful assimilation of the new teacher into the teaching profession. Heck and Blaine (1989), found that mentor teachers played an important supportive role during the transition from student teacher. They report in their study that new teachers felt less isolated when they were given help by their mentor teachers. Pigge and Marso(1990), found in their study of first-year teachers, that the protege rated their mentor as being most helpful regarding the following stress related areas: classroom management, student discipline, meeting school requirements and regulations, dealing with other professionals, dealing with parents, and finally assistance in preparing lessons.

Characteristics of Effective Mentor/Protege Relationships

There were several common characteristics of successful mentor protege relationships which were documented in the literature. Schmoll (1983), found that these qualities included compatibility, similar values, similar commitment levels, trust, openness, acceptance, and caring. Kay and Sabatini (1988), concurred with these findings, and additionally stressed the importance of confidentiality when dealing with the inexperienced teacher. They found that new teachers needed to feel comfortable

when confiding in the mentor because this facilitated the risk taking behaviors needed for professional growth. Ganser (1991), found that there were at least five areas of importance regarding characteristics of effective mentor relationships: work experience, personality, grade level, subject area,and accessibility to one another. The participants in this study reported that other characteristics such as age, gender, and philosophy of, or approach to teaching, were of relatively little importance.

Problems Encountered in the Mentor/Protege Relationship

In most mentor protege relationships, there were problems at various times which were cause for concern. Warring and Lindquist (1989), found that if mentors and proteges were not completely aware of all program goals there was apprehension and misunderstanding which stifled good communication and hindered the progress of the relationship.

Another problem area which proved to be a disruptive influence on the supportive relationship, was when the protege did not appear to be as participatory as deemed necessary by the mentor (Shulman & Colbert, 1987). This was manifested either in the form of communication or the refusal to follow suggestions. The nature of the relationship must be reciprocal for it to be of maximum benefit. The mentor is only one part of the relationship. The protege must be willing to participate and fully interact with

the mentor. The protege must be convinced of the advantages of the arrangement and display interest and willingness to learn.

Time and accessibility were seen as problem areas in mentoring. The mentor and the protege needed sufficient time together to adequately develop the relationship, and explore issues of concern. If the mentor was not available at critical junctures, some mentors felt they were not adequately supporting the protege (Stahlhut 1988). It was also perceived as being important to have common lunch times, and preparation periods in order for the participants to use these occasions to discuss pertinent issues.

The mentors needed to allow the protege to take risks. Bova and Philips (1984), found that proteges needed to be encouraged to take the risks associated with broadening their repertoire of skills. If the protege was timid and afraid to take risks, learning was impeded. They reported that some of the proteges in their study were use to playing it safe. They determined that the mentors found it necessary to let the proteges know they would survive if they took chances and experimented in their classrooms. This addresses the issue of safety and the need for the protege to be able to take risks without fear of reprisal.

Having a mentor who had experience teaching in the same subject area was another perceived requirement according to some proteges. Ganser (1991), found that most teachers felt that it was vital to good communication for the mentor and the protege to

have the same subject area background. Proteges felt their mentors were more empathetic if they spoke the common language of the subject area . Ganser also reported that the Vocational Education teachers involved in the study felt that it was vital to the relationship to have a mentor in the same content area because of the technological concerns with which they dealt. Huffman and Leak (1986), also found that mentors should have knowledge and experience in the same subject, specialty, or grade level as the novice teacher they were assisting.

All administrators and other supervisory personnel needed to be made aware of the mentor relationship and its parameters. Klug (1988), found that administrators and principals, often saw the mentor as a surrogate evaluator, or assistant supervisor. Mentors reported that this was a very difficult position in which to be placed, and became frustrated by the administrators' lack of understanding. Some mentors reported that they were expected to share damaging information with the administrator who would in turn use this information against the protege during evaluations (Shulman & Colbert, 1987). This was seen as a direct violation of the purpose for which mentoring was intended -- to foster trust and encourage open communication.

The Role Of Administrators

Administrators play a crucial role in the mentor/ protege relationship. Odell (1987),posited that it was often the responsibility of the administrator to recommend those teachers who would best qualify for the role of mentor. Administrators

must therefore be very familiar enough with the abilities of prospective mentors to enable them to make wise and intelligent choices regarding who would be the best suited for this very demanding challenge.

Administrators had the primary responsibility for setting the tone of the working environment for the new teacher. Hirsh (1990) suggested that if the new teacher was welcomed to the school,and introduced to their colleagues and parent organizations, it was very helpful Hirsh also suggested that it was important to make the new teacher feel they were an asset to the school it helped them feel more confident and supported. These measures were conducive to a good start and could be used to prevent the common feelings of intimidation so common in new situations. The administrator, who was often the building principal, needed to show support for the success and professional growth of the new teacher. This was true even though the mentor was the person assigned to help with day to day problems. This was done in several ways. The principal helped the mentor/protege team to arrange times when they could meet in order to carry on the necessary conferences or discussions. According to Kamii and Harris-Sharples (1988), the principal must not only allow release time for the mentor and protege to observe other excellent teachers in the same school or at other locations, but also help with the logistics of such needs such as substitutes for the involved parties. As previously stated time for conferences is one of the most important issues bearing on the success of the mentor/protege relationship.

Finally and as previously noted, it was very important for the administrator to respect the privacy of the mentor/protege relationship. In a study conducted by Gold and Pepin 1987, even though administrators maintained the role of supervision and evaluation, mentor teachers maintained contact with administrators but did not violate the conditions of confidentiality. This allowed mentors to feel that the relationship was not being intruded upon. In conjunction with respecting the relationship,administrators acknowledged that they could not provide the kind of in depth assistance required of new teachers. The administrators expressed gratitude for the role the mentors played in helping the new teacher

Stages of the Mentor/Protege Relationship

One of the most interesting aspects of the mentor/protege relationship was it's evolutionary nature. As in most new relationships, the participants in the mentorship go through various predictable stages. Krup (1987), discussed a three stage theory; the Initiation Stage where the relationship is established, the Mentoring Process Stage, wherein the mentor goes to great lengths to foster the protege's growth and trust is established over time, and the Termination Stage where the mentor encourages independence at the appropriate time. During the Termination Stage, Krup suggested that hard feelings could occur if the separation was not mutually agreed upon. Krup went on to say that it was incumbent upon the mentor to intuitively know when to step back while simultaneously encouraging independence

and growth. Most often however, the participants retained feelings of warmth if the timing was carefully orchestrated. This was manifested by the protege being ready to assume the responsibilities of independence.

An earlier proponent of the Stage Theory was Kram (1983). Kram said that there were four stages, the Initiation Stage, the Cultivation Stage, the Separation Stage, and the Redefinition Stage. In the Redefinition Stage,a mutually supportive friendship developed or the protege and mentor may feel used and bitter. During this fourth stage it was appropriate for the mentor to view the protege as a peer not a student or a dependent person who is still in need of unsolicited advice

It was very important for the experienced mentor teacher to become aware of these stages in order to guarantee the necessary professional growth, and eventual independence of the protege The literature revealed a time in the relationship when the protege no longer was as dependent on the mentor's guidance and high level of support, as he or she once was. This was a time of change in the relationship, -- a departure from dependence and toward competence and independence. It was vital that the mentor recognize this subtle change in the dynamics of the relationship. The mentor needed to allow and encourage the protege to become more independent. By recognizing this change, the mentor actually acknowledged the success of the support period.and at the same time validated the proteges' new found competency. At this point, the relationship tended to become a peer relationship

(Kram 1983; Gray & Gray,1985). Gehrke (1988), posits that even though the nature of the mentor/protege relationship may change drastically over time, proteges retain feelings of gratitude for their mentors which may even border on feelings of platonic love.

Summary Of Literature Review

New teachers faced many problems during their first year in the profession. They felt unprepared to deal with the realities of the classroom such as isolation from support systems and classroom management problems. Induction support of new teachers often had a critical bearing on the new teachers' decision to stay or leave the profession. One of the most useful and successful ways of delivering this support was the use of experienced veteran teachers as mentors. The mentors had excellent teaching skills and a real desire to help the novice overcome some of the pitfalls of the first year in the field. Mentors served as role models, support persons, advocates, defenders, and confidants. Even in the most well orchestrated mentor programs there were areas of concern. All parties needed to know the nature of the mentorship mechanism. They also needed to demonstrate a clear understanding of program features such as the need for confidentiality and the non-supervisory role of the mentor. One of the responsibilities of the protege was to be an active partner in the relationship. The new teacher needed to confide in, and communicate with, the mentor. The new teacher also needed to display a willingness to carry out the suggestions

of the mentor. Time and accessibility to each other was a problem which was viewed as a hindrance to the relationship. Mentors needed to be available at critical moments. If they were not, some of the mentors reported feelings of inadequacy. It was of great importance in some of the studies that the mentor and the protege were in the same subject area and even in the same grade level. It was reported that the common language of the content area facilitated communication and empathetic feelings. This was especially true of Vocational Education teachers due to the technical nature of the subject matter.

In the mentor relationship there was a time when the protege became competent and no longer required the intensive assistance of the mentor. It was critical that the mentor be sensitive to this change in the need levels of the protege. If the mentor respected this independence the relationship could remain warm and friendly albeit redefined. If the mentor did not allow the protege to grow,and begrudged this pulling away, the relationship could end bitterly and be a source of disappointment for both parties.

Administrators and other supervisory personnel, while being necessary to the mentor mechanism, were sometimes insensitive to the need for confidentiality. As previously stated, the essence of the mentor/protege relationship is privacy, trust, and confidentiality. In some cases administrators expected the mentor to breach these rules and thereby sabotaged the relationship.

Recommendations

The following are a list of recommendations which may be important when dealing with the issues brought forth in this review. They are not given in order of perceived importance and are put forth following the extensive literature review described earlier in this document.

1. In-service Training for Administrators and Peer Teachers

The literature supported the belief that in order to avoid some of the problems encountered by the mentor and the protege, the administrator and peer teachers of the protege and mentor be briefed through some sort of in-service training. Topics of the in-service could deal with issues such as characteristics which tend to define the mentor/protege relationship. This could include the need for confidentiality and the need to provide a safe environment in which the protege can make mistakes , both of which are conducive to professional growth. At this time peer teachers may be recruited to befriend the protege and assist in the acculturation process into the teaching profession in a friendly and supportive manner.

2. Availability of Mentors For New Teachers

One of the most useful and practical ways help new and talented teachers succeed in the profession is to provide assistance in the form of mentorships. By assigning experienced master teachers to new teachers, not only is the attrition rate reduced,

but new teachers learn the best techniques and skills from those teachers who have proven that the methods and techniques are sound.

3. Appropriate Training for All Mentor Teachers

Mentor teachers are chosen by their administrators on the basis of their qualifications as master teachers not necessarily because they already possess the skills to qualify as master mentors. Therefore it is important that mentors receive specialized training which is theory and research based. Mentor teachers must be able to provide support for the various methods which will be discussed during the course of the relationship. some of these topics may include classroom management, conferencing skills, teaching methods, resource materials,etc..Additionally, mentors could benefit from instruction regarding active listening techniques, general characteristics of the mentor/protege relationship, and issues regarding administrators and the need for confidentiality.

4. Continued Research Regarding The Effects of Different Subject Mentoring

Even though one of the findings of this literature review was the importance of the mentor and the new teacher to be in the same subject area, there is a need for further research regarding this finding especially research which investigates the issue of mentoring as it pertains to rural education. One of the problems inherent to rural education is that there may be only one teacher

in a specific area in the entire school, if not region. The isolation of schools in rural areas may call for mentors to work with teachers from different subject areas. This may be appropriate if opportunities are provided for specific content area mentoring by some other technically qualified teacher while the on site mentor provides the day to day assistance the new teacher needs.

5. Required Coursework Regarding Classroom/Behavior Management and Working With Special Populations

The literature is replete with reasons new teachers leave the teaching profession. Among the most sited were those dealing with student's inappropriate disruptive behavior, and lack of knowledge regarding how to work with special needs students.

Universities must address these problems prior to graduation and teacher certification. Courses in classroom and behavior management must become required not optional. In conjunction with the theoretical aspects of these subjects, required internships would allow the new teacher to get actual, hands-on experience dealing with these issues before they reach their own classrooms and face the problems which cause many to leave the profession.

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